

Having a CT scan

Department of Radiology

Information for Patients

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If you are an outpatient please read your appointment letter carefully to check which hospital you must go to for your appointment.

What is a CT scan?

A CT (computed tomography) scan is an X-ray examination that gives much more information than a normal X-ray. It produces detailed images of your organs and blood vessels.

How to get ready for your CT scan

- It is very important that you follow the preparation instructions in your appointment letter.
- If you take any medication, do not stop taking them without talking to your doctor.
- Please bring with you any sprays, inhalers or angina tablets that you are taking.
- If you have diabetes please talk to your normal diabetes care provider about the eating and drinking instructions in your appointment letter. Please tell the CT staff on arrival if you have diabetes.
- If there is any possibility that you may be pregnant, please contact the Radiology Department immediately. Your appointment may need to be rescheduled. Failure to do so may result in your examination being postponed on the day.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Important safety information

You may be given an injection of a colourless liquid (contrast liquid) that shows up on X-rays and CT scans, into a vein in your arm. The contrast liquid contains iodine and is cleared by the kidneys in your pee (urine) or at your routine dialysis if you have dialysis.

Please tell the CT staff when you arrive if:

- **you are allergic to iodine or rubber (latex), have any other allergies or have asthma.**
- **you have reacted previously to an intravenous contrast liquid** (the dye used for kidney X-rays and CT scanning and X-rays of your heart and blood vessels).
- **you are on dialysis or have any problems with your kidneys.**
- **you have diabetes.**
- **there is any possibility that you may be pregnant.**

Who will be doing the examination?

A radiographer will carry out the examination. They may be assisted by a doctor who specialises in CT scans and a radiology assistant.

As we are a teaching hospital, a student may also be present. If you wish, you can ask that the student is not present during your examination.

What happens during the CT scan?

If you are having a scan of your tummy (abdomen) you may be asked to drink up to 1 litre of fluid before your scan. This may take up to 1 hour. The fluid will help give more detailed images.

You may be asked to change into a hospital gown. You will be taken into the scan room and you may ask any questions that you have.

You will be asked to lie still on the scan table and to hold your breath several times during the examination. The radiographer will tell you when to do this over the intercom.

If you have any difficulties lying flat or holding your breath for a short time (up to 20 seconds), please tell the staff when you arrive.

An injection of a contrast liquid into a vein in your arm may be needed to show your blood vessels on the scan images. The supervising radiology doctor (radiologist) will decide this before your scan and you will be fully informed. Some patients get a warm feeling and a metallic taste when the injection is given, and may feel sick. If you do get these feelings they usually only last for about 1 minute.

You may be in the Radiology Department for up to 90 minutes in total. The CT scan takes between 10 and 30 minutes. The time will vary for each patient.

What happens after the examination?

If you were given an injection of contrast liquid, you will need to stay with us for a short time (15 to 30 minutes) after your scan before you can go home. You should then be free to return to work/ normal daily life. You can have something to eat and drink after the examination.

Are there any risks?

- **Reaction to contrast liquid** - some patients may be allergic to the contrast liquid. If you develop symptoms at home, such as a rash, you should contact your GP or call 111.
- **Possible risks from radiation** - the main risk from having X-rays is an increase in the risk of getting a cancer in the future. This risk is thought to be very small. We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. This comes from the sun, food we eat, and the ground. Each examination gives a dose on top of this natural background radiation. The risks of radiation are slightly higher for an unborn child so we must ask some patients aged 10 to 55 years about their last period and possibility of being pregnant. The radiation from the X-rays during a CT scan is equivalent to receiving up to 5 years of natural background radiation. The benefits of this examination are likely to outweigh any potential risk, and the risk from not having the examination could be greater. We take all safeguards to minimise the amount of X-rays you receive.

How do I get the results?

The results will not be given to you immediately. Pictures from your CT scan will be looked at by a radiologist and the results will be sent to the doctor who referred you for this examination. An explanation of how to get your results will be given to you after your examination.

Any questions?

If you have any questions or concerns please call the Radiology Department on 0116 258 8765 and select option 3, Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk